

English Verb Tense Review

Simple Present Tense

Otherwise known as the
Timeless Present

Simple Present Tense is used:

- When you are referring to habitual actions--actions that you always or never do
- When you are referring to unchanging truths
- When you are making general statements of fact

Examples

- (habit) He always comes late to class.
- (unchanging truth) The sun rises in the east.
- (general statement of fact) They are friendly.

Indicators

Always

Whenever

Everyday

Usually

Often

Frequently

Sometimes

Rarely

Occasionally

never

Form

I **study**

I **wait**

You **study**

You **wait**

S/he/it **studies**

s/he/it **waits**

We **study**

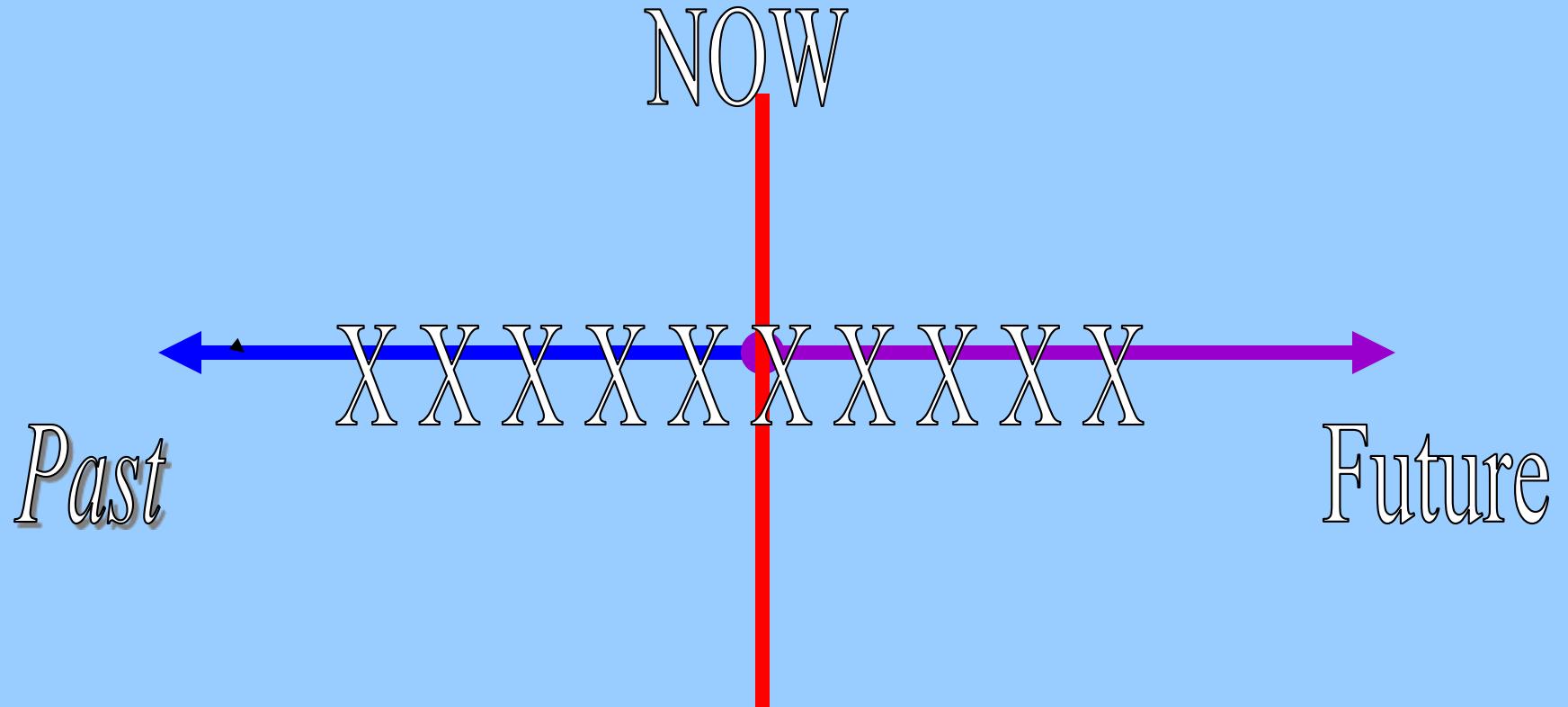
we **wait**

They **study**

they **wait**

simple present tense

Diagram--time on a line



simple present tense

Simple Past Tense

The Simple Past Tense is Used:

- When an activity or situation *began* and *ended* at a particular time in the past--in other words, when an activity or situation is completed in the past
- To refer to past habits

Examples

- (Completed action in the past) He was late to class yesterday.
- (Completed action in the past) We arrived three weeks ago.
- (Past habit) She always wrote a letter to her mother on Sunday night.

Indicators

Last night, week, year, month, Saturday,
semester, etc.

Yesterday

ago

Simple Past Tense

Form

I **studied**

You **studied**

S/he/it **studied**

We **studied**

They **studied**

I **waited**

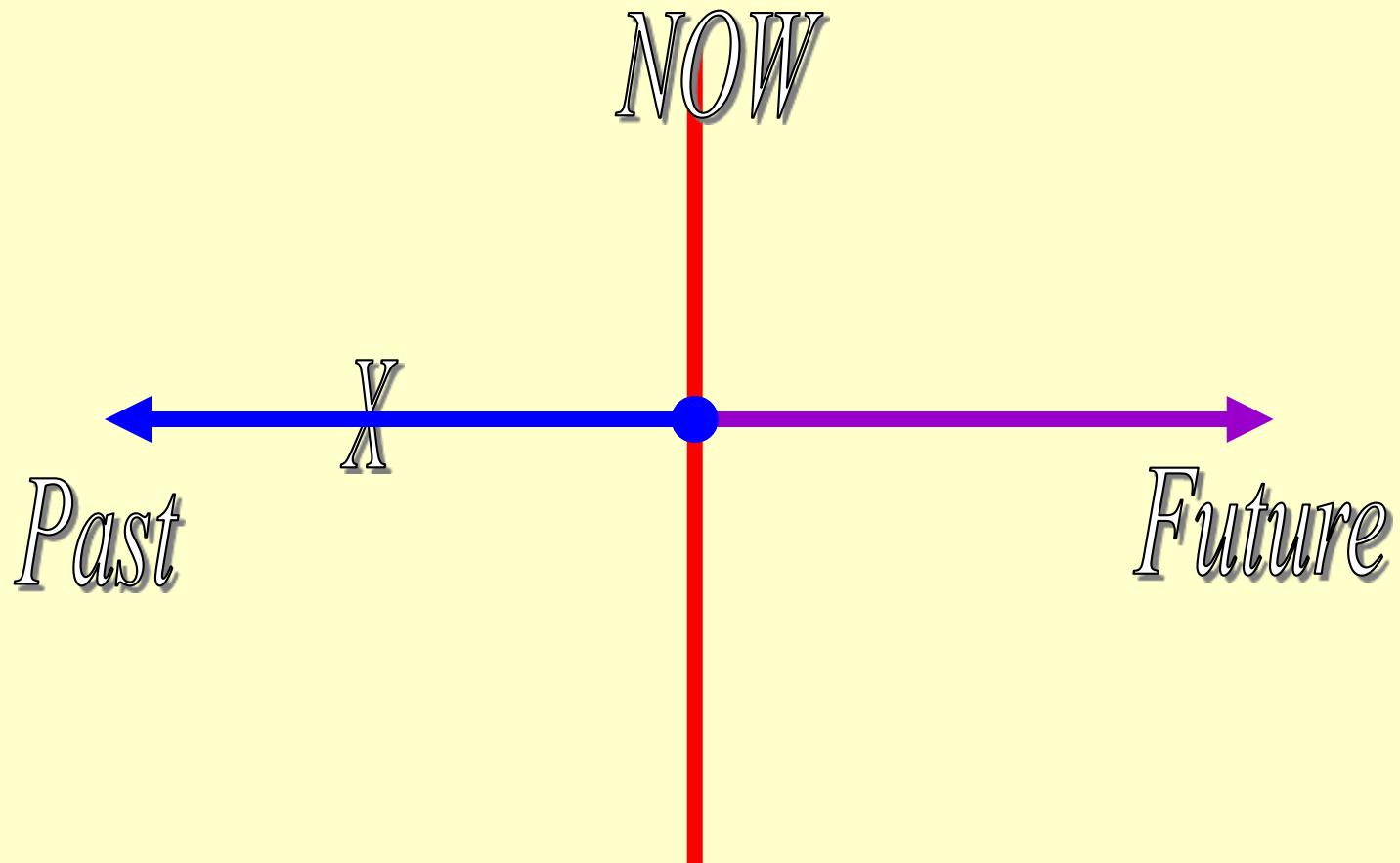
You **waited**

S/he/it **waited**

We **waited**

They **waited**

Diagram--time on a line



Simple Past Tense

The Present Perfect

A tense very commonly used in English to refer to the past!

The Present Perfect is Used:

- When an activity happened at an *unspecified* time in the past (before the present)
- When an activity has been *repeated* several times before now
- When an activity was very *recently* completed before now
- When an activity is *not completed* in the past

Examples

- (unspecified time before now) They have already seen that movie.
- (repeated activity before now) We have visited New York City many times.
- (an action has recently been completed before now) I have just eaten.
- (action not completed in the past) I have studied Spanish for many years.

Indicators

Before

Ever

Never

So far

Already

Yet

Just

Recently

For

since

Form 1

have or has + past participle

I **have studied** . . .

I **have seen** . . .

You **have studied** . . . You **have seen** . . .

S/he/it **has studied** . . . S/he/it **has seen** . . .

We **have studied** . . . We **have seen** . . .

They **have studied** . . . They **have seen** . . .

Form 2

I've walked . . .

You've walked . . .

S/he/it's walked . . .

We've walked . . .

They've walked . . .

I've grown . . .

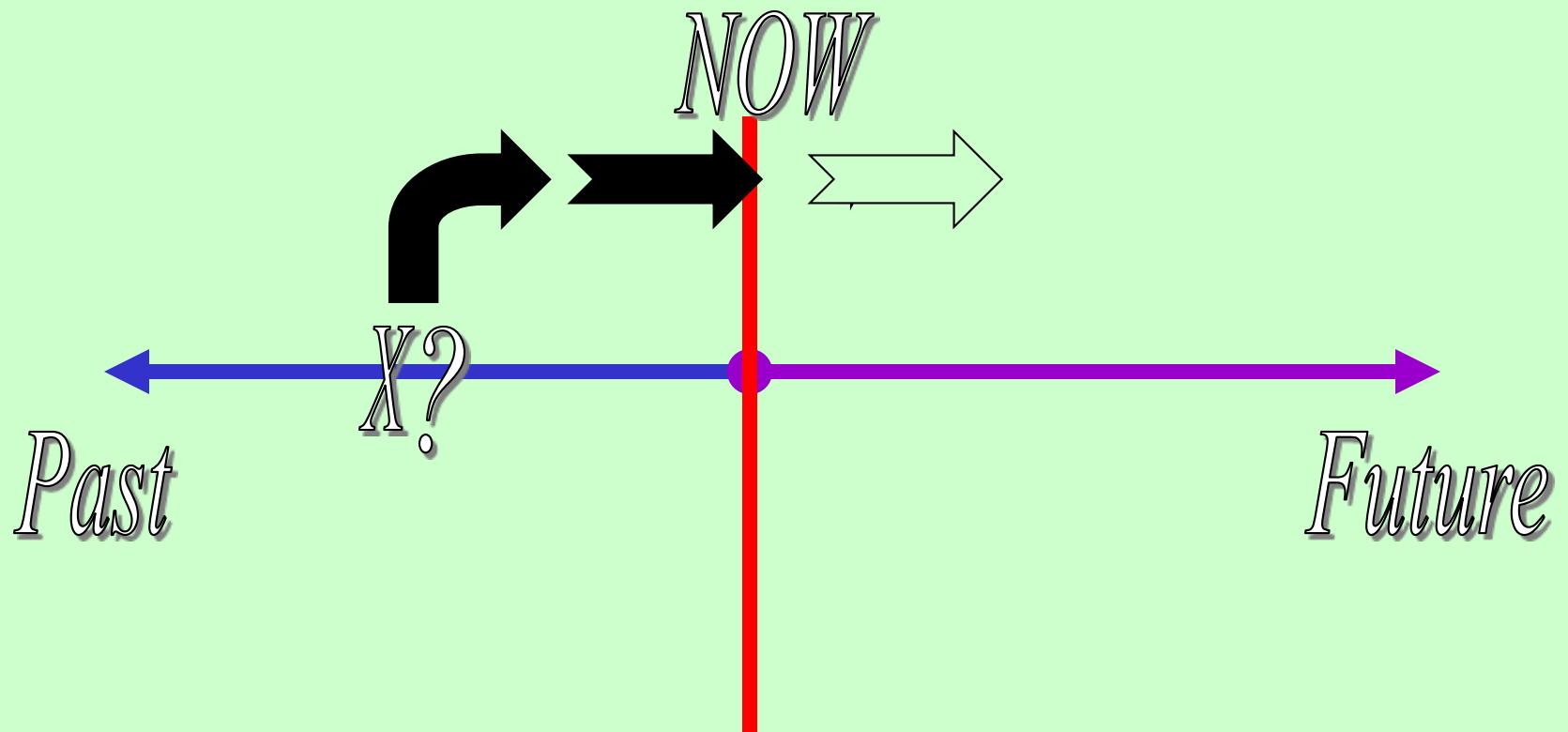
You've grown . . .

S/he/it's grown . . .

We've grown . . .

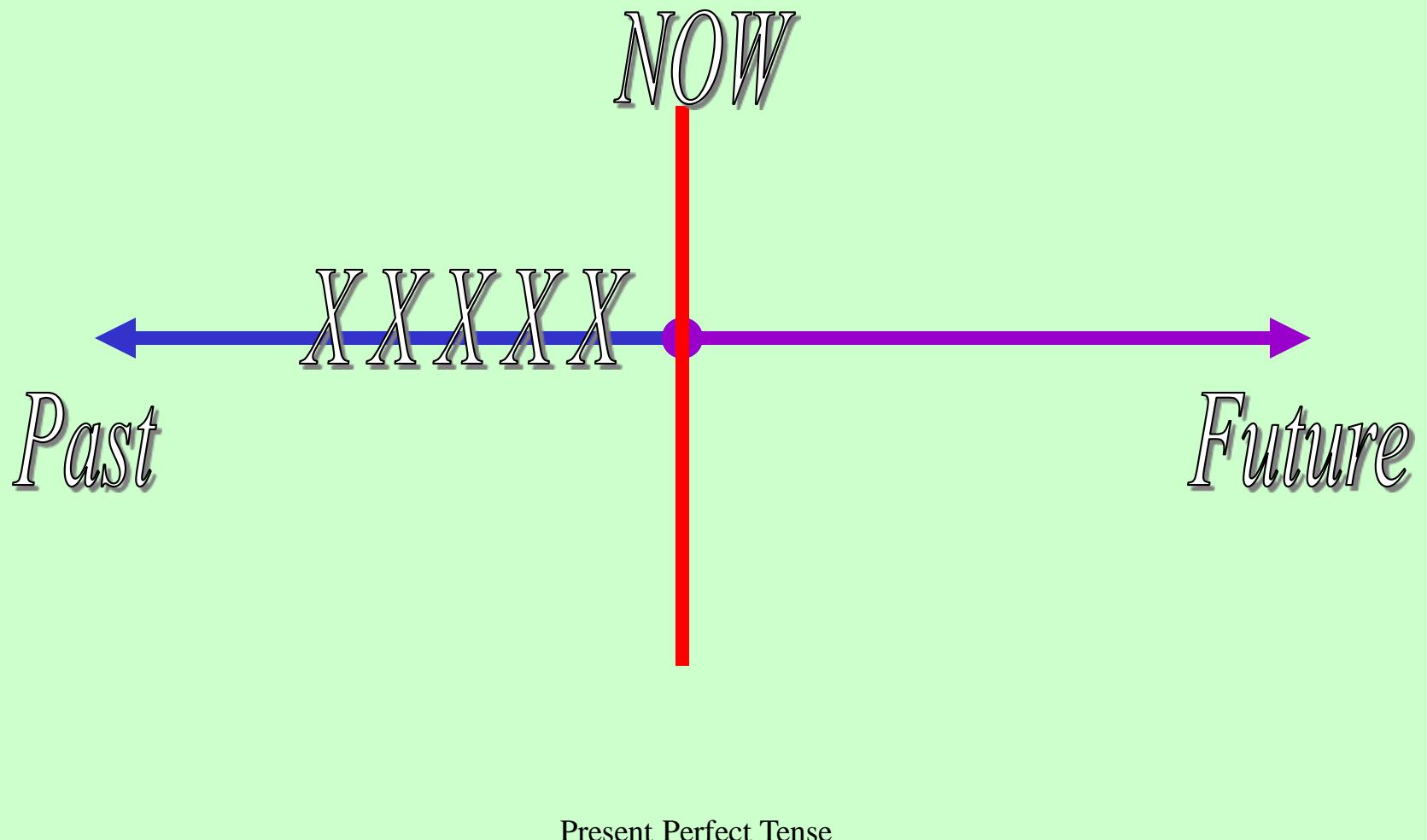
They've grown . . .

Diagram 1--time on a line



Present Perfect Tense

Diagram 2--time on a line



The Present Progressive Tense

Sometimes called the
Present Continuous Tense

The Present Progressive Tense is Used:

- When an activity is in progress **now** at the moment of speaking
- When an activity began before **now** and continues into the future without stopping.
- When an activity is temporary.
- When an activity is developing and changing.

Examples

- I'm explaining something to the class right now.
- He's taking 16 credits this semester.
- She is understanding English more and more because she moved into the dorm.

Indicators

Right now, at this
moment Still

This year, week,
month, etc. As we speak

Form

I am studying

I'm studying

You are studying

You're studying

S/he/it is studying

S/he/it's studying

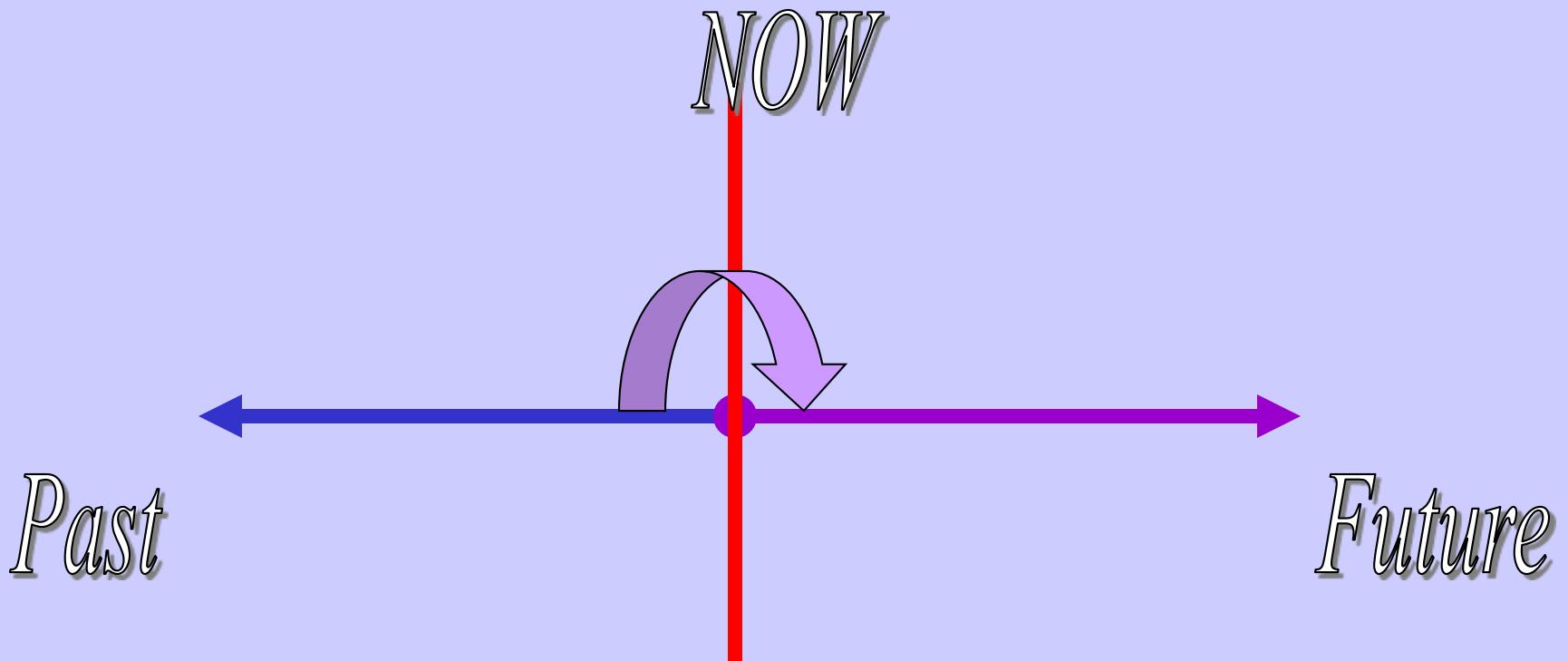
We are studying

We're studying

They are studying

They're studying

Diagram--time on a line



Present Progressive Tense

Future Tense

The Future Tense is Used:

- To indicate that an activity or event will take place at a time in the future

Examples

- When I'm retired, I'm going to travel.
- Next week, we will work on punctuation.
- He is going to get his car fixed tomorrow.
- Our plane departs at noon next Friday.

Indicators

Tomorrow

Next Saturday, week, month, year, etc.

Future

Form 1

I **will stay**

I'll **stay**

You **will stay**

You'll **stay**

S/he/it **will stay**

S/he/it'll **stay**

We **will stay**

We'll **stay**

They **will stay**

They'll **stay**

Future

Form 2

I am going to stay I'm going to stay

You are going to stay You're going to stay

S/he/it is going to stay S/he/it's going to stay

We are going to stay We're going to stay

They are going to stay They're going to stay

Form 3

Sometimes the simple present tense or the present progressive tense are used to express a future meaning. Usually these tenses are used when scheduled events are being discussed.

I arrive

I am arriving

You arrive

You are arriving

S/he/it arrives

S/he/it is arriving

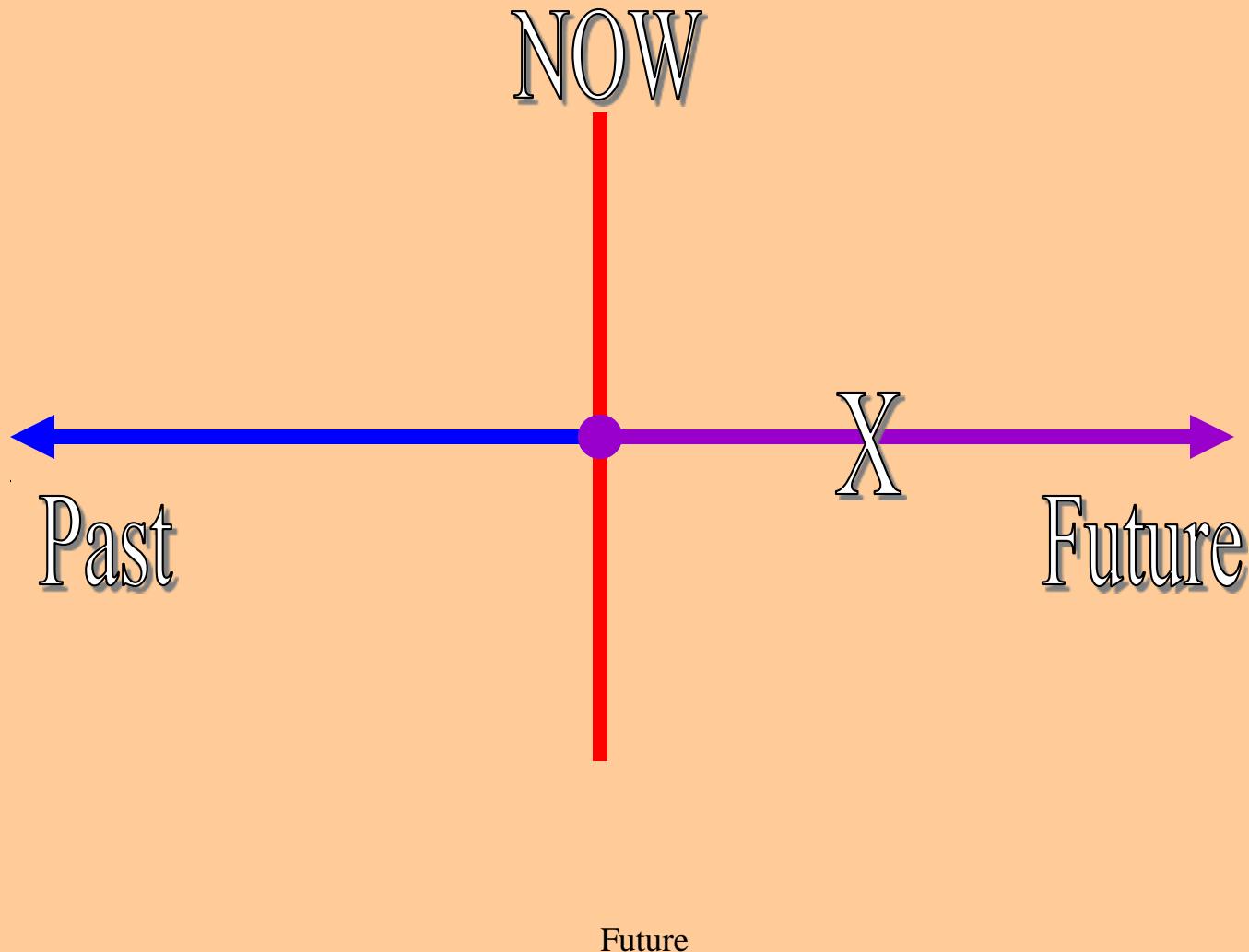
We arrive

We are arriving

They arrive

They are arriving

Diagram--Time on a Line



Other English Verb Tenses

These tenses are combinations of the
tenses we have just reviewed

Past Perfect

- This tense is not used a lot. It can often be used interchangeably with the simple past because these tenses do not differ much in meaning. The past perfect tense refers to activities that happened **before** a specific time in the past.
- Example, *He had visited her many times before she died.*
- Form: *had + past participle*

Past Progressive

- This tense is used to refer to activities *continuously* in progress around a time in the past.
- Example: *They were eating when the taxi arrived.*
- Form: ***was or were + verb-ing***

Past Perfect Progressive

- This tense is used when an activity was *continuously* in progress **before** a specific time in the past.
- Example: *I had been thinking about her before she called.*
- Form: *had + been + verb^{ing}*

Present Perfect Progressive

- This tense is used to describe actions that have been *continuously* in progress **before** now. These actions are not completed.
- Example: *I have been waiting here for the last two hours.*
- Form: *have or has + been + verbing*

Future Perfect

- The future perfect expresses the idea that an activity will occur **before** some future time.
- Example: *She will have finished dinner before the game starts.*
- Form: *will + have + past participle*

Future Progressive Tense

- This tense is used to refer to activities that will be *continuously* in progress around some future time.
- Example: *We will be flying over New York at noon tomorrow.*
- Form: *will + be + verbing*

Future Perfect Progressive

- This tense is used to refer to activities that will be *continuously* in progress **before** a future time.
- Example: *He will have been working for 3 hours before you arrive.*
- Form: *will + have + been + verbing*

Overview of the English Verb Tense/Aspect System

	Simple	Perfect (HAVE + verb+en)	Progress- ive (BE + verb+ing)	Perfect Progress- ive (HAVE + BEEN + verb+ing)
Present	*	*	*	
Past	*			
Future	*			

Acknowledgments

- The charts in this presentation were adapted from the work of Betty Schramper Azar. She is the author of *Understanding and Using English Grammar* and many other useful ESL texts.

The End

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